



American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
1732 Wisconsin Ave., NW | Washington, DC 20007 | www.adc.org
Tel: 202-244-2990 | Fax: 202-244-7968 | Email: adc@adc.org

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In Memoriam

Hala Salaam Maksoud, PhD
(1943-2002)
Alex Odeh
(1944-1985)

August 4, 2008

Via Email: katie.lawrence@mail.house.gov

Dear Congressman Rogers,

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) is the nation's largest and oldest organization dedicated to protecting the civil rights and promoting the rich cultural heritage of Americans of Arab descent. Established in 1980 by a former US Senator, ADC is a non-sectarian, non-partisan grassroots organization representing an American community which consists of people of a variety of faiths, including Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Coptic, Jewish, Hindu, and others who don't identify as religious. ADC has members in every state, thirty-eight volunteer-based chapters, headquarters in Washington, DC, and five regional offices. ADC is an executive board member of the nation's premiere civil rights coalition, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR). As such, ADC is quite disappointed with a recent post on your official website.

On your website, you posted a video describing your energy plan. A section states "we import millions of barrels of oil a month from all over the world and these countries are using American money to expand their military, manipulate elections, and promote terrorism." This accusation portrays an incorrect stereotype about the Arab world, not to mention the nature of our oil imports. To make matters worse, you have also included a caricature of a man in what is considered typical Arab dress in the Middle East. Next to the picture is a caption that states: "Drive the oil prices up! We need more money for Jihad!" The posting of such an image is divisive and espouses cultural and religious stereotypes. It insinuates that all Arabs are oil barons who seek to gain money for terrorist acts. It is the worst kind of fear mongering and serves no purpose other than to cast an extremely negative light on Arabs and ultimately, on Arab Americans.

ADC holds this tactic to be potentially detrimental to your standing, your personal integrity, and the effectiveness of your energy independence plan. As a community leader, your constituents should be able to expect a more mature and nuanced debate from their representative without the trappings of hateful stereotypical images. ADC requests that you reconsider the content of your campaign video and publicly disassociate yourself from such fear-mongering tactics.

Sincerely,

Tony Kutayli, JD
Communications Coordinator

Kareem Shora, JD, LL.M.
National Executive Director